

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-14, 16-19 and 21 are pending in the captioned application. Applicants hereby cancel claims 1-14, amend claim 17 and introduce new claims 22-34. Applicants submit that the added claims depend on claim 17 and belong to the same restriction group as claim 17. Applicants also submit that these claims are similar in scope to the now cancelled claims 1-14 and no new matter is introduced.

The Examiner has required a restriction of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §121 and §372. Applicants elect, without traverse, to prosecute the invention of Group III, namely claims 17-19 and 22-34, drawn to a separation matrix. Applicants hereby withdraw the non-elected claims 16 and 21. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications on the non-elected groups.

Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are in allowable form and earnestly solicit the allowance of the claims.

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Amendment dated February 5, 2007
Reply to Office action of January 11, 2007

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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